

NEW YORK TIMES
5 November 1985

ARTICLE APPEARED IN
PAGE A10.

Excerpts From the Defector's News Conference at Embassy

Following are excerpts from a news conference in Washington yesterday by Vitaly Yurchenko yesterday at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, as recorded by the New York Times:

OPENING STATEMENT

YURCHENKO: This press conference has been held on my request because I'd like to inform the American press and the American media about the situation and change my experience, as he says, about how I feel about that situation.

I'd like to tell you, during these three horrible months for you I didn't have any chance to speak Russian. I was explained that they say there is a shortage of Russian-speaking translators. And therefore, the whole three months I speak English. From one point of view maybe I improve some, learning your language, but I no recommend such system of English education, language.

And therefore, I prefer now to speak Russian and I hope that our translator will help you to understand me.

TRANSLATOR: In early August 1985, while on a business trip in Italy, I was forcibly abducted in Rome by some unknown persons. Unconscious, I was brought from Italy to the U.S.A.

Here, I was kept in isolation, forced to take some drugs and denied the possibility to get in touch with official Soviet representatives. Only on Nov. 2, due to the momentary lapse of attention on the part of the persons watching me, I was able to break out to freedom and come to the Soviet Embassy. Later, after some rest, I will answer in detail, in Moscow, the questions which might interest the representatives of the press.

At the moment, my only wish is to return as soon as possible to my country, to my family, kin and friends.

QUESTIONS

AND ANSWERS

Secret Information

Q. Mr. Yurchenko, are we to believe that in the three months that you were in the hands of the American intelligence authorities that you did not in any way provide secret information of Soviet intelligence and other activities?

A. In the period when I was conscious and controlled my behavior, I did not pass any secret information.

When they were talking with me, when I was not drugged, they were telling me that I came to them, came to the Americans myself on my own will, on my own accord. Well, initially they were telling me that. Later an-

other group of people which were talking with me started telling me that some friends brought me over to them.

I did not believe them. I was convinced that they were deceiving me. When later they started giving me some facts of a business nature, I nevertheless did not believe that I passed any secret information to the Americans.

When I drugged with the use of some special drugs, I don't know what I was saying or what I was doing. The thing which I want to mention outright is that I was threatened.

When I was conscious and when they were talking with me, they were telling me that while you see everyone thinks you're a traitor, and they showed me documents which were written in my hand. They were saying that they had recordings of my conversations. Nevertheless I did not believe them.

They were trying to say that everybody will believe what they were saying but will not believe me if I would say something else. And they, I think were hoping that eventually I will start to believe that I have had indeed passed some information of secret nature.

YURCHENKO: Please, ask C.I.A. officials what kind secret information I gave them. It would be very interesting for me to know, too, because I don't know.

Human Rights

Q. The question by the Tass representative, Aleksandr Shalnev. From your person view, how do you regard the fact that the monstrous crime which was committed against you and which amounts to a violation of your every human and personal right was perpetrated by the same people and by the same authorities who, louder than others, speak about the need to uphold human rights?

TRANSLATOR: This is a typical example of lies and hypocrisy. You know, several minutes ago, before they started the press conference, they again showed what is happening with that sailor, Medved. And your representatives were talking quite loudly, were saying quite loudly, that they were trying to safeguard human rights.

Business of Spying

Q. Is your business spying, intelligence?

YURCHENKO: First of all, it is well known I worked here five years in Washington as a security chief officer of... but there's not any secrets. And therefore its answer to your question. But you know, if you are speaking about the spying business, see, I know — I don't give any — I'm not going to make any comments about spying business.

Meeting With C.I.A. Chief

Q. Did you meet with Mr. Casey?

YURCHENKO: Yeah.

Q. That is the C.I.A.

YURCHENKO: Yeah.

TRANSLATOR: And therefore, furthermore, so when I was told that I was going to meet with Mr. Casey, they spent two days preparing me for that meeting.

Maybe I might not be happy about the circumstances I was in, but I was not supposed to show that I was protesting that actively. Well, I knew that after — in certain intervals they were giving me drugs. And they gave me drugs also several hours before that meeting with Mr. Casey, but a lesser amount of drugs than was usual. So I do remember that meeting, but everything seems to have happened as if in a fog. So if I make some mistake, please ask Mr. Casey to verify it.

I remember that I was brought to the main building of the C.I.A. headquarters in Langley and that I was taken by elevator to the seventh floor to Mr. Casey's office. I was in a condition obviously that was the point of the strongest effect of the drug that when Mr. Casey entered the office I at first did not recognize him. I rose, greeted him and later we went to Mr. Casey's dining room and had dinner in his dining room.

Later, I have only vague recollections of the conversation, but it was kind of a general conversation of big policy issues regarding the summit, things which they usually write about in the newspapers.

State Terrorism

Q. I have a different question for you. Since you are certain that you have been abducted by a government agency, could you... further, please, as a case of state-sponsored terrorism?

TRANSLATOR: I believe that first it is a typical example of hypocrisy and, second, a typical example of state-sponsored terrorism. But the representatives of the U.S. Government and I believe that the level of Mr. Gerber, who is the chief of the Soviet desk of the C.I.A. is a governmental level, they always try to show that they are sort of not in this thing, that they are somewhere on the fringes. When I was telling him that I felt bad and that what they were going was ruthless, he was saying to me that it was not really his business, that he was only conducting political conversations with me.

And the same thing with Mr. Casey who was evading effectual conversation about my case and rather was dealing in generalities. It was my impression that handling me was a group of people somewhat separate from them.

What other examples of state-sponsored terrorism can there be when I had a diplomatic passport, I was visiting another country, and I was brought over here somehow and was not given an opportunity for a meeting. What other examples can there be of state-sponsored terrorism?

Escape in Virginia

Q. Could you elaborate on how you escaped from what you said was a safe house 22 miles from Fredericksburg, 500 acres, six people guarding you, drugging you. It all sounds implausible. Is it possible as someone else has told us that you were given a great deal of freedom and you were not well guarded?

TRANSLATOR: Well, I found myself in a really tough situation. I have a 16-year-old son and he had his problems, with his studies and his behavior. Some of the comrades who worked with me here in the embassy, they're aware of that. And I used to tell him there can be no situation with no way out. If you really think about it you can always find a way out of any situation.

Previous Defector

Q: I ... bureau of the Soviet Investigation. First of all, on behalf of all the Soviet people who are here, I'd like to congratulate you on your return home. My question is twofold. Almost a year ago there was an exactly, or an almost exactly case like that. Alek Bytov, the correspondent for the Literaturnaya Gazeta, was kidnapped in Rome, brought to the United States then to England and managed to escape from them. I'd like to hear a comment from you on this.

And my second question is whether your abductors in the C.I.A. ever told you anything at all about your family.

YURCHENKO: O.K. Two questions. But once we were out of Washington, I saw your press conferences. I remember your face. And therefore I answer on two your questions. And I was very proud of Soviet reports and journalists. Because — I'm sorry — because it's sometimes difficult to speak. Main thing, you see, when you are in such isolation that you helpless. You can do nothing.

Even if I tried to commit suicide, they won't give me a chance to escape. Because 24 hours, I even went, excuse me, when I was sleeping, they prohibited to even to close the door. Door should be closed, and next room was sitting such fat, quiet, stupid — excuse me — unemotional person who is following the order. Only following the orders.

I read on the newspapers about Bytov. I don't know ... but I can now understand he exactly. And I can un-

derstand now ... Bulgarian now in Italy. The same Italy. Bytov was kidnapped in Italy. I don't know. Maybe they have special teams there who are supporting, supplying them with human materials for such books. I don't know.

TRANSLATOR: When they realized that they could not break me in that manner, maybe the fact that we're going to have a summit saved me.

They tried to lure me for the past three weeks. And they were telling me that, anyway, they are regarding you as a traitor. You see that there were things written about you in the newspapers.

If you flee and return to the Soviet Union anyway, a prison and death is awaiting you.

We'll send the K.G.B. all the materials we got from you, and you will be jailed there.

And here that man three times brought to me a contract which they suggested I sign. And according to that contract, I was supposed to do nothing. The only thing I was supposed to do was to live and keep silent in the United States. And I would be one of the consultants.

The points in that — the items included in that contract — I was supposed to get \$1 million tax free beginning Nov. 1 — that as a down payment. And to the end of my life they were going to pay me annually \$62,500, and that sum would grow taking into account inflation. Besides, they would provide me with free medical care.

And besides they were going to give me all the furniture they had stacked in that three-floor building. The total price of that furniture was supposed to be \$48,000. And ... even calculated that — well, that was an unlimited kind of a contract to the end of my life that I was going to be earning \$180,000 a year, which is more than the income of the U.S. President after he retires.